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INDUSTRY:

Ukrainian Performance Criticized: A great deal of what should have been done but was not is revealed in a lengthy budget message by Finance Minister Shchetinin before the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet (Mar. 27). The Ministries of the Local, Building Materials, Civilian Housing Construction, and Furniture Industries are said to have fallen short of their 1951 targets. Looking into the rising costs of production at some of the industrial enterprises, the Minister asserts that financial mismanagement, violations of "expenditure discipline," and an attitude of indifference to lower production costs are among the major contributing factors. Back of it all, it is inferred, is the lukewarm attitude of the management toward profitable operations (rentabelnost) which calls for a systematic reduction of production costs. An extreme case of cost variations is cited in connection with the Ministry of the Local Industry where the production of a child's bicycle in one plant is several times higher than the cost of producing an identical bicycle in another plant. Another example is that of the Southern Power Construction Trust (Trest Pivden-Energo-Bud), the largest of its kind in the Ukraine. Instead of lowering production costs and saving 3 million rubles, according to plan, the Trust showed an overexpenditure of 14 million.

Overpayment to workers, according to Shchetinin, contributes to "unprofitable operations" and should be discontinued at once. In the Lvov Furniture Trust, for example, the total payroll amounted to 103.8% of the plan whereas the average output per worker was only 95.5%. The Ministry of Civilian Housing Construction of the Ukrainian SSR has not only "failed to fulfill its 1951 construction plan" but also "completed the year with great losses." Serious dereliction of duty is also charged to the Ministry of Health Service for its failure to provide proper medical service for the population. In such large areas as Drogobych, Rovno, Kherson, and Dnepropetrovsk Oblasts the planned network of medical establishments in the rural areas "was not completed" in 1951.

Reviewing the Ukraine's industrial activities primarily from a financial point of view, Shchetinin judges the success or failure of a particular industry or enterprise by the way its appropriations are utilized. Most of his references to industrial shortcomings are therefore made in such terms as "improper utilization of allocations", overexpenditure or use of appropriations for purposes "not originally planned." Thus some unnamed Republican and local organs of Soviet administration are said to be tolerating cases of financial abuse, and violations of "State and expenditure" discipline.

There were cases of wrong utilization of allocations in the local budgets and squandering of allocations for capital repair of schools, hospitals and clubs and the construction of new administrative buildings.

Ukrainian version:

Po mistsevykh budgetakh dopuskayut nepravilno vykorystane assygnovan, dopuskayut vytrachanye koshtiv assygnovannykh na kapitalny remont shkil, leharev, klubiv, na nove budivnitstvo, v tomu chisli administrativnykh budynkiv.

Abuses of a more serious nature, including theft, are said to be prevalent in the distribution of consumer goods at the rayon level. Not only is the quality of goods disregarded, as heretofore, but the quantity appears to be adversely affected by squandering and pilfering (rozstraty i kradizhki). Such practices have already cost the State over 8.5 million rubles in overexpenditures, in addition to the 9-million ruble loss incurred by the food distribution organizations.

Finance Minister Fadeyev's report before the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR (Mar. 27) is somewhat milder in tone. The chief target of his attack, however, is also the abuse of the average consumer. Referring to the assortment of consumer goods, the Minister reveals that in 1951 the Ministry of the Local Industry was short 65 varieties of mass consumption goods and the Industrial Cooperative System (promyslovaya kooperatsia) 42, including furniture, household dishes and utensils, and others. The supply of inferior quality goods (dostavka nedobrokachestvennykh izdeliy) is almost taken for granted in a number of local trading organizations, while their losses and unnecessary overexpenditures are an additional burden on the budget (dopolnitelno obremenyaet budzhet). Production of inferior consumer goods is also attributed to the Republican Ministry of Light Industry. The losses it sustained in 1951 alone through quality reduction (ot ponizhennoy sortnosti) amounted to 21.8 million rubles.

"Estimate padding" (nezakonnoye zavyshenie smetnykh raskhodov), as revealed by both Fadeyev and Deputy Afanassyev on the same day, is being practiced by the planning organizations (proyektnie organizatsii) of the various industries on a large scale. Afanassyev in fact intimates that entire krais, oblasts, and autonomous republics are involved in it. Cases of payroll account padding (nezakonno povyshennye stavki zarabotnoy platy) are particularly frequent, and the result is a top-heavy administrative machine. Fadeyev points out that a checkup on the personnel of 38 auto-transport organizations in Leningrad alone revealed that the "approved number of administrative staff members" (utverzhdenniy administrativno-upravlencheskiy apparat) was exceeded by 440 officials drawing a total salary of 279,000 rubles.

In a summarized talk for economics students (Mar. 26), Arutelyan suggests two basic methods which, if used simultaneously, will raise the output and lower production costs. They are the "extensive and intensive" (ekstensivniy i intensivniy) methods of production. The extensive method, though elaborated under 10 different points, is designed to eliminate bottlenecks and machine stoppages by improving the maintenance of the equipment and fixing responsibility on shops, teams, and individual workers for its proper operation. The intensive method, continues Arutelyan, is nontechnical in nature but just as important and offers "almost unlimited possibilities" for the development of the national economy. Its salient point is "fostering feelings of Soviet patriotism and a Communist attitude toward labor."

The Ministry of the Lumber Industry (Ministerstvo Lesnogo Khozaistva) has been the object of official attacks for some time. It is repeatedly referred to at the current Supreme Soviet sessions of the RSFSR, the Ukraine and elsewhere as having lagged behind the plan last year and showing little improvement in 1952. The Ministry's planning, according to Deputy Afanassyev, "does not always call for...the proper expenditure of State funds" (ne vseгда predusmatrivayet...pravilnoye raskhodovanie gosudarstvennykh sredstv).

The performance of the Ukrainian lumber industry, particularly in the Transcarpathian region, is also discussed in disparaging terms in Shchetinin's budget message. The output of semimanufactures in a number of lumber enterprises, he says, has actually decreased by 15%. This, in turn, has adversely affected the production of the building materials industry which incidentally is also working behind plan.

SOVETSKAYA RODINA (Mar. 18) declares bluntly that the lumber production and floating plan, having failed last year, is still "not progressing satisfactorily" this year. The paper intimates that the reason for the breakdown of the winter haulage plan -- performance less than 50% -- is the "inadequate care" taken of the lumber-floating workers. The trade union and Party organizations are therefore urgently requested to take a better look into the lumberjacks' living conditions and supply them with sufficient food, newspapers, books and "other means of political education and propaganda."

In an otherwise stereotyped collective letter to Stalin, the Donets Basin coal miners promise to make a better showing in the future and produce more and better coal. As discussed in previous CPW reports, collective letters to Stalin, despite their optimistic accounts of current or past achievements, are often actually prompted by failings and are designed to forestall official condemnation. The miners' reference to the many shortcomings (mnogo nedochetov) in their work which will presumably be eliminated is further amplified in the following assertion:

We are profoundly conscious of the fact that...the Motherland has a right to demand of us more coal...and particularly a definite qualitative improvement in the fulfillment of the State plan.

Russian version:

My gluboki soznaem, chto...Rodina vprave trebovat ot nas bolshego uvelichenia dobychi uglia... i osobenno rezkogo uluchshenia kachestvennikh pokazateley vypolnenia gosudarstvennogo plana.

Commenting editorially on the miners' "eagerness" to increase production and their "challenge" to the Kuznets Basin miners to emulate their example, PRAVDA (Mar. 18) calls upon all the Party organizations of the mining areas to encourage their Socialist competition and "eliminate the elements of formalism in this undertaking" (ustranyat elementy formalizma v etom dele). The triple purpose of Socialist competition, the paper reiterates, is greater production, higher quality and lower costs.

Kazakh SSR, says KAZAKHSTANSKAYA PRAVDA (Mar. 29), is the largest nonferrous metallurgical base in the Soviet Union but the performance of its mining industry leaves much to be desired.

Many mining brigades are not fulfilling their ore extraction plans owing to bad labor organization. Machines regularly remain idle...the excavator part is not working at full capacity...

The editorial does not offer any additional details beyond the remark that "due importance" is not attached to the utilization of machinery. East Kazakhstan, South Kazakhstan, Karaganda, and Taldy Kurgan Oblasts are urged to "improve their management" of the mining industry and see to it that mining equipment is utilized to full capacity. Passing reference to the shortcomings on the Emba oilfields is made by the same paper on Mar. 20. Technical deficiencies are said to "impede the raising of the fuel output," and well-drilling is behind the plan:

...it is first of all necessary to eliminate the underestimation of the importance of drilling works, to get rid of idleness and breakdowns.

not by tackling the seamy side of life but by making the behavior of our "positive heroes" (polozhitelnie geroi) appear in a ridiculous light. Such false and artificial comical situations have nothing in common with the reality of life (s zhiznennoy pravdoy). Bolshakov also wants to know why many producers persistently refrain from depicting the personal life of workers and collective farmers, their multifarious spiritual desires and interests:

Reading certain scenarios, one would think that the entire life of the worker is spent in the plant among machines and mechanisms while the life of the peasants is confined to the machinery on the field.

Russian version:

Chitaya inie stsensarii, možno podumat, čto vsia zhizn rabochego protekayet na zavode sredi stanov i mekhanizmov, a zhizn krestyan -- na pole sredi mashin.

The fact that only two paintings were awarded Stalin Prizes is a sorry commentary on the progress of that branch of art, according to Besspalov, chairman of the USSR Art Committee (Mar. 18). Painting could have been more progressive and expressive if the Soviet artists would only make an effort to overcome the "substantial shortcomings" (sushchestvennie nedostatki) in their work. The recent All-Union Art Exhibition in Moscow, says Besspalov, has revealed instances of "haste and incompleteness" (speshki, nedorabotannost) in most of the exhibits. The most important drawback in the artists' work is their superficial familiarity with Soviet reality: they are unable...to depict the Soviet man as he really is. That is why most of the paintings are devoid of any specific content (bezsyuzhetnie), are uniformly dull and "spiritually impoverished" (dukhovno obednennie). The Soviet artist, the article concludes, "cannot and must not ... live on past successes" (ne možet i ne dolzhen ... zhit proshlymi uspekhami); he must not lag behind the ever-growing demands of the Soviet people.

A report from Moscow (Mar. 23) speaks of the recent conference of the Capital Party Committee to look into the affairs of the city's 91 colleges. It is disclosed that a number of professors resort to "oversimplification and vulgarization" (uprščhenchestvo i vulgarizatsia) in the treatment of the theoretical questions. A number of colleges are said to be using the wrong approach to the teaching of social and economic sciences. This is because in numerous instances the scientific qualifications of the instructors are patently inadequate for their jobs. The report does not offer any specific details as to the ideological errors committed by the professors in question, but states that the Ministry for Higher Education was subjected to serious criticism for its shortcomings in the "guidance" of the social science departments of the Moscow universities.

Ideological aberrations of a different nature are dealt within two broadcasts from the Ukraine. VILNA UKRAINA (Mar. 18) reminds its readers that "remnants of capitalism still linger in the memories of some people". These people, Stalin is quoted as having said, are far more dangerous in the sphere of national questions than in any other sphere: "In our country...there is no room for the emergence of bourgeois ideology, including bourgeois nationalism." The paper calls for a "decisive struggle against all manifestation of bourgeois ideology and above all Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism. Discussing the political education in the enlarged collective farms, RADIANSKA UKRAINA (Mar. 21) says that the cultural achievements of the Great Russian people are not sufficiently extolled and that not enough lectures are given on remnants of Ukrainian nationalist ideology, "the worst enemy of the Ukrainian people."

Remnants of capitalism in the people's minds is also the subject of a talk by Prof. Konstantinov of the All-Union Society for the Propagation of Political and Scientific Knowledge (Home Service, Mar. 29). Discoursing at some length on the "hideous aspect" of bourgeois democracy and right-wing Socialism, the professor admits that these twin evils have not been entirely eliminated in the Socialist Motherland: